



The Library of



Crosby Hall

Presented by

*Lewis Foster*

1735 821  
281  
with very best wishes  
for Xmas and the New  
year.

from  
Guy

BFWG



Sybil Campbell Collection  
Formerly Crosby Hall Library





# LOYALTIES



## BY THE SAME AUTHOR

---

### POEMS—

POEMS. 1908-1914

SWORDS AND PLOUGHSHARES. 1915

OLTON POOLS. 1916

TIDES. 1917

### PLAYS—

COPHETUA. 1911

REBELLION. 1914

PAWNS. THREE PLAYS. 1917

ABRAHAM LINCOLN. 1918

### PROSE STUDIES—

WILLIAM MORRIS. 1912

SWINBURNE. 1913

THE LYRIC. 1915

PROSE PAPERS. 1917

# Loyalties

by John Drinkwater

London : Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd.

3 Adam Street, Adelphi

**MEMXX**

*First published in 1919*  
*Second Impression, January 1920*

821  

---

1148

*All rights reserved*

1289



TO  
K. D.



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
HABITATION . . . . .	9
BLACKBIRD . . . . .	11
SOUTHAMPTON BELLS . . . . .	12
MYSTERY . . . . .	14
MRS. WILLOW . . . . .	16
CONSTANCY . . . . .	18
BUDS . . . . .	20
CROCUSES . . . . .	21
REALITY . . . . .	23
SHOWS . . . . .	24
CHARACTER . . . . .	25
RUPERT BROOKE . . . . .	26
ON READING FRANCIS LEDWIDGE'S LAST SONGS	27
CHARGE TO THE PLAYERS . . . . .	28
NEMESIS . . . . .	29
THE LIFE OF JOHN HERITAGE . . . . .	30
THOMAS YARNTON OF TARLTON . . . . .	32
WRITTEN IN WINTERBORNE CAME CHURCH . . . . .	33
THE FUGITIVE . . . . .	35
TRIAL . . . . .	36

	PAGE
PERSPECTIVE . . . . .	37
AT AN INN . . . . .	38
MOONRISE . . . . .	39
OF ILES FARM . . . . .	40
TO SIEGFRIED SASSOON . . . . .	41
PROVOCATIONS . . . . .	43
INSTRUCTION . . . . .	44
RESPONSIBILITY . . . . .	45
HISTORY . . . . .	46
THE TALENT . . . . .	48
DEAR AND INCOMPARABLE . . . . .	49
THE WOOD . . . . .	50
AT AN EARTHWORKS . . . . .	51
THE PATRIOT . . . . .	52
DEER . . . . .	54
ON A LAKE . . . . .	55
HARVEST MOON . . . . .	56
PASSAGE . . . . .	57
THE COMMON LOT . . . . .	58
TO ONE I LOVE . . . . .	59
HARVESTING . . . . .	62

# LOYALTIES

## HABITATION

HIGH up in the sky there, now, you know,  
In this May twilight, our cottage is asleep,  
Tenantless, and no creature there to go  
Near it but Mrs. Fry's fat cows, and sheep  
Dove-coloured, as is Cotswold. No one hears  
Under that cherry-tree the night-jars yet,  
The windows are uncurtained ; on the stairs  
Silence is but by tip-toe silence met.  
All doors are fast there. It is a dwelling put by  
From use for a little, or long, up there in the  
sky.

Empty ; a walled-in silence, in this twilight of  
May—

A home for lovers, and friendly withdrawing,  
and sleep,

With none to love there, nor laugh, nor climb  
from the day

To the candles and linen. . . . Yet in the silence  
creep,



This minute, I know, little ghosts, little virtuous  
lives,  
Breathing upon that still, insensible place,  
Touching the latches, sorting the napkins and  
knives,  
And such for the comfort of being, and bowls  
for the grace,  
That roses will brim ; they are creeping from  
that room to this,  
One room, and two, till the four are visited . . .  
they,  
Little ghosts, little lives, are our thoughts in  
this twilight of May,  
Signs that even the curious man would miss,  
Of travelling lovers to Cotswold, signs of an  
hour,  
Very soon, when up from the valley in June will  
ride  
Lovers by Lynch to Oakridge up in the wide  
Bow of the hill, to a garden of lavender  
flower. . . .

The doors are locked ; no foot falls ; the hearths  
are dumb—  
But we are there—we are waiting ourselves  
who come.

## BLACKBIRD

HE comes on chosen evenings,  
My blackbird bountiful, and sings  
Over the gardens of the town  
Just at the hour the sun goes down.  
His flight across the chimneys thick,  
By some divine arithmetic,  
Comes to his customary stack,  
And couches there his plumage black,  
And there he lifts his yellow bill,  
Kindled against the sunset, till  
These suburbs are like Dymock woods  
Where music has her solitudes,  
And while he mocks the winter's wrong  
Rapt on his pinnacle of song,  
Figured above our garden plots  
Those are celestial chimney-pots.

## SOUTHAMPTON BELLS

### I

LONG ago some builder thrust  
Heavenward in Southampton town  
His spire and beamed his bells,  
Largely conceiving from the dust  
That pinnacle for ringing down  
Orisons and Noël's.

In his imagination rang,  
Through generations challenging  
His peal on simple men,  
Who, as the heart within him sang,  
In daily townfaring should sing  
By year and year again.

## II

Now often to their ringing go  
The bellmen with lean Time at heel,  
Intent on daily cares ;  
The bells ring high, the bells ring low,  
The ringers ring the builder's peal  
Of tidings unawares.

And all the bells might well be dumb  
For any quickening in the street  
Of customary ears ;  
And so at last proud builders come  
With dreams and virtues to defeat  
Among the clouding years.

## III

Now, waiting on Southampton sea  
For exile, through the silver night  
I hear Noël ! Noël !  
Through generations down to me  
Your challenge, builder, comes aright,  
Bell by obedient bell.

You wake an hour with me ; then wide  
Though be the lapses of your sleep  
You yet shall wake again ;  
And thus, old builder, on the tide  
Of immortality you keep  
Your way from brain to brain.

## MYSTERY

THINK not that mystery has place  
In the obscure and veiled face,  
Or when the midnight watches are  
Unaccompanied of moon or star,  
Or where the fields and forests lie  
Enfolded from the loving eye  
By fogs rebellious to the sun,  
Or when the poet's rhymes are spun  
From dreams that even in his own  
Imagining are half-unknown.

These are not mystery, but mere  
Conditions that deny the clear  
Reality that lies behind  
The weak, unspeculative mind,  
Behind contagions of the air  
And screens of beauty everywhere,  
The brooding and tormented sky,  
The hesitation of an eye.

Look rather when the landscapes glow  
Through crystal distances as though  
The forty shires of England spread  
Into one vision harvested,  
Or when the moonlit waters lie  
In silver cold lucidity ;  
Those countenances search that bear  
Witness to very character,



And listen to the song that weighs  
A life's adventure in a phrase—  
These are the founts of wonder, these  
The plainer miracles to please  
The brain that reads the world aright ;  
Here is the mystery of light.

## MRS. WILLOW

MRS. THOMAS WILLOW seems very glum.  
Her life, perhaps, is very lonely and hum-drum,  
Digging up potatoes, cleaning out the weeds,  
Doing the little for a lone woman's needs.  
Who was her husband? How long ago?  
What does she wonder? What does she know?  
Why does she listen over the wall,  
Morning and noon-time and twilight and all,  
As though unforgotten were some footfall?

"Good morning, Mrs. Willow." "Good morning, sir,"

Is all the conversation I can get from her.  
And her path-stones are white as lilies of the wood,

And she washes this and that till she must be very good.

She sends no letters, and no one calls,  
And she doesn't go whispering beyond her walls;

Nothing in her garden is secret, I think—  
That's all sun-bright with foxglove and pink.  
And she doesn't hover round old cupboards and shelves

As old people do who have buried themselves;  
She has no late lamps, and she digs all day  
And polishes and plants in a common way,  
But glum she is, and she listens now and then

For a footfall, a footfall, a footfall again,  
And whether it's hope, or whether it's dread,  
Or a poor old fancy in her head,  
I shall never be told ; it will never be said.

## CONSTANCY

THE shadows that companion me  
From chronicles and poetry  
More constant and substantial are  
Than these my men familiar,  
Who draw with me uncertain breath  
A little while this side of death ;  
For you, my friend, may fail to keep  
To-morrow's tryst, so darkly deep  
The motions mutable that give  
To flesh its brief prerogative,  
And in the pleasant hours we make  
Together for devotion's sake,  
Always the testament I see  
That is our twin mortality.  
But those from the recorded page  
Keep an eternal pilgrimage.  
They stedfastly inhabit here  
With no mortality to fear,  
And my communion with them  
Ails not in the mind's stratagem  
Against the sudden blow, the date  
That once must fall unfortunate.  
They fret not nor persuade, and when  
These graduates I entertain,  
I grieve not that I too must fall  
As you, my friend, to funeral,  
But rather find example there  
That, when my boughs of time are  
bare,

And nothing more the body's chance  
Governs my careful circumstance,  
I shall, upon that later birth,  
Walk in immortal fields of earth.



## BUDS

THE raining hour is done,  
And, threaded on the bough,  
The may-buds in the sun  
Are shining emeralds now.

As transitory these  
As things of April will,  
Yet, trembling in the trees,  
Is briefer beauty still.

For, flowering from the sky  
Upon an April day,  
Are silver buds that lie  
Amid the buds of may.

The April emeralds now,  
While thrushes fill the lane,  
Are linked along the bough  
With silver buds of rain.

And, straightly though to earth  
The buds of silver slip,  
The green buds keep the mirth  
Of that companionship.

## CROCUSES

TO E. H. C.

DESIREs,  
Little determined desires,  
Gripped by the mould,  
Moving so hardly among  
The earth, of whose heart they were bred,  
That is old ; it is old,  
Not gracious to little desires such as these,  
But apter for work on the bases of trees,  
Whose branches are hung  
Overhead,  
Very mightily, there overhead.

Through the summer they stirred,  
They strove to the bulbs after May,  
Until harvest and song of the bird  
Went together away ;  
And ever till coming of snows  
They worked in the mould, for undaunted were  
those  
Swift little determined desires, in the earth  
Without sign, any day,  
Ever shaping to marvels of birth,  
Far away.

And we went  
Without heed  
On our way,  
Never knowing what virtue was spent,  
Day by day,

By those little desires that were gallant to breed  
Such beauty as fortitude may.  
Not once in our mind  
Was that corner of earth under trees,  
Very mighty and tall,  
As we travelled the roads and the seas,  
And gathered the wage of our kind,  
And were laggard or trim to the call  
Of the duties that lengthen the hours  
Into seasons that flourish and fall.

And blind,  
In the womb of the flowers,  
Unresting they wrought,  
In the bulbs, in the depth of the year,  
Buried far from our thought ;  
Till one day, when the thrushes were clear  
In their note it was spring—and they know—  
Unheeding we came into sight  
Of that corner forgotten, and lo,  
They had won through the meshes of mould,  
And treasures lay in the light,  
Of ivory, purple, and gold.

## REALITY

It is strange how we travel the wide world over,  
And see great churches and foreign streets,  
And armies afoot and kings of wonder,  
And deeds a-doing to fill the sheets  
That grave historians will pen  
To ferment the brains of simple men.

And all the time the heart remembers  
The quiet habit of one far place,  
The drawings and books, the turn of a passage,  
The glance of a dear familiar face,  
And there is the true cosmopolis,  
While the thronging world a phantom is.

## SHOWS

JUST as with men and women met  
In daily usage of the town,  
I treat with you, and this forget  
In charity, and that set down  
Where memory your honour keeps.

And you approach me every day  
With an indifferent judgment, count  
My virtues from my frailties, weigh  
Coldly the motives at the fount  
Whence welling every action leaps.

And this the world sees ; this it knows  
For all the marriage of our wit.  
And thus the world divines the shows  
Of service, while the pearl of it  
Glows in unfathomable deeps.



## CHARACTER

If one should tell you that in such a spring  
The hawthorn boughs into the blackbird's nest  
Poured poison, or that once at harvesting  
The ears were stony, from so manifest  
Slander of proven faith in tree and corn  
You would turn unheeding, knowing him for-  
sworn.

Yet now, when one whose life has never known  
Corruption, as you know : whose days have been  
As daily tidings in your heart of lone  
And gentle courage, suffers the word unclean  
Of envious tongues, doubting you dare not cry—  
“ I have been this man's familiar, and you lie.”

RUPERT BROOKE .

(DIED APRIL 23, 1915)

TO-DAY I have talked with old Euripides ;  
    Shakespeare this morning sang for my content  
Of chimney-sweepers ; through the Carian trees  
    Comes beating still the nightingales' lament ;  
The Tabard ales to-day are freshly brewed ;  
    Wordsworth is with me, mounting Loughrigg  
    Fell ;  
All timeless deaths in Lycid are renewed,  
    And basils blossom yet for Isabel.

Quick thoughts are these ; they do not pass ;  
    they gave  
    Only to death such little, casual things  
As are the noteless levies of the grave,—  
    Sad flesh, weak verse, and idle marketings.  
So my mortality for yours complains,  
While our immortal fellowship remains.

ON READING FRANCIS LEDWIDGE'S  
LAST SONGS

At April's end, when blossoms break  
To birth upon my apple tree,  
I know the certain year will take  
Full harvest of this infancy.

At April's end, when comes the dear  
Occasion of your valley tune,  
I know your beauty's arc is here,  
A little ghostly morning moon.

Yet are these fosterlings of rhyme  
As fortunately born to spend  
Happy conspiracies with time  
As apple flowers at April's end.

## CHARGE TO THE PLAYERS

THE TROJAN WOMEN, BIRMINGHAM REPERTORY  
THEATRE, APRIL 1918

SHADES, that our town-fellows have come  
To hear awake for Christendom  
This cleansing of a Pagan wrong  
In flowing tides of tragic song,—  
You shadows that the living call  
To walk again the Trojan wall,—  
You lips and countenance renewed  
Of an immortal fortitude,—  
Know that, among the silent rows  
Of these our daily town-fellows,  
Watching the shades with these who bring  
But mortal ears to this you sing,  
There somewhere sits the Greek who made  
This gift of song, himself a shade.

## NEMESIS

WHILE honour droops, your argument  
Brings you the profits of your trade  
And nothing mars your foul content  
Where truth's a shade.

And we, sad wisdom, are but dumb  
Herds of the waste, until again  
The angels of persuasion come  
To govern men.

If you should prosper for a year,  
Or if uncalendared the date,  
Truth as a patient gospeller  
Will wait, and wait.

While we in speculation brood  
Your evil tongues are on the mount,  
Till every poor unlessoned mood  
Comes to account.

## THE LIFE OF JOHN HERITAGE

BORN in the Cotswolds in eighteen-forty or so,  
Bred on a hill-top that seemed the most of the  
world  
Until he travelled the valleys, and found what  
a wonder  
Of leagues from Gloucester lay to Stroud or  
Cicester,  
John Heritage was a tiler. He split the stone,  
After the frosts, and learnt the laying of tiles,  
And was famous about the shire. And he was  
friendly  
With Cotswold nature, hearing the hidden rooks  
In Golden Vale, and the thin bleat of goats,  
And the rattling harness of Trilly's teams at  
plough,  
And Richard Parker's scythe for many years,  
As he went upon his tiling ; and the great land-  
marks,  
As loops of the Severn seen from Bisley Hill,  
Were his familiars, something of his religion.

And he prospered, as men do. His little wage  
Yet left a little over his wedded needs,  
And here a cottage he bought, and there another,  
About the Cotswolds, built of the royallest stone  
That's quarried in England, until he could think  
of age  
With an easy mind ; and an acre of land was his

Where at hay-harvest he worked a little from  
tiling,  
Making his rick maturely or damning the wind  
That scattered the swathes beyond his fork's  
controlling.  
And he trotted ajog to the town on market  
Thursdays,  
Driving a stout succession of good black geldings,  
That cropped his acre some twenty years apiece.  
And he was an honest neighbour ; and so he  
grew old,  
And five strong sons, grizzled and middle-aged,  
Carried him down the hill, and on a stone  
The mason cut—" John Heritage, who died,  
Fearing the Lord, at the age of seventy-six."

And I know that some of us shatter our hearts  
on earth,  
With mightier aims than ever John Heritage  
knew,  
And think such things as never the tiler thought,  
Because of our pride and our eagerness of  
mind . . .  
But a life complete is a great nobility,  
And there's a widsom biding in Cotswold stone,  
While we in our furious intellectual travel  
Fall in with strange foot-fellows on the road.

## THOMAS YARNTON OF TARLTON

ONE of those old men fearing no man,  
Two hundred broods his eaves have known  
Since they cut on a Sapperton churchyard  
stone—

“Thomas Yarnton of Tarlton, Yeoman.”

At dusk you can hear the yeomen calling  
The cattle still to Sapperton stalls,  
And still the stroke of the woodman falls  
As Thomas of Tarlton heard it falling.

I walked these meadows in seventeen-hundred,  
Seed of his loins, a dream that stirred  
Beyond the shape of a yeoman's word,  
So faint that but unawares he wondered.

And now, from the weeds of his tomb uncomely  
I travel again the tracks he made,  
And walks at my side the yeoman shade  
Of Thomas Yarnton of Tarlton dumbly.



WRITTEN IN WINTERBORNE CAME  
CHURCH

(WILLIAM BARNES, 1801-1886)

TO MRS. THOMAS HARDY

I DO not use to listen well  
At sermon time,  
I'd rather hear the plainest rhyme  
Than tales the parsons tell ;

The homespun of experience  
They will not wear,  
But walk a transcendental air  
In dusty rags of sense.

But humbly in your little church  
Alone I watch ;  
Old rector, lift again the latch,  
Here is a heart to search.

Come, with a simple word and wise  
Quicken my brain,  
And while upon the painted pane  
The painted butterflies

Beat in the early April beams,  
You shall instruct  
My spirit in the knowledge plucked  
From your still Dorset dreams.

Your word shall strive with no obscure  
Debated text,  
Your vision being unperplexed,  
Your loving purpose pure.

I know you'll speak of April flowers,  
Or lambs in pen,  
Or happy-hearted maids and men  
Weaving their April hours.

Or rising to your thought will come,  
For lessoning,  
Those lovers of an older spring,  
That now in tombs are dumb.

And brooding in your theme shall be,  
Half said, half heard,  
The presage of a poet's word  
To mock mortality.

. . . . .

The years are on your grave the while,  
And yet, almost,  
I think to see your surpliced ghost  
Stand hesitant in the aisle,

Find me sole congregation there,  
Assess my mood,  
Know mine a kindred solitude,  
And climb the pulpit-stair.

## THE FUGITIVE

BEAUTY has come to make no longer stay  
Than the bright buds of may  
In May-time do.

Beauty is with us for one hour, one hour,  
Life is so brief a flower ;  
Thoughts are so few.

Thoughts are so few with mastery to give  
Shape to these fugitive  
Dear brevities,

That even in its hour beauty is blind,  
Because the shallow mind  
Not sees, not sees.

And in the mind of man only can be  
Alert prosperity  
For beauty brief.

So, what can be but little comes to less  
Upon the wilderness  
Of unbelief.

And beauty that has but an hour to spend  
With you for friend,  
Goes outcast by.

But know, but know—for all she is outcast—  
It is not she at last,  
But you that die.

## TRIAL

BEAUTY of old and beauty yet to be,  
Stripped of occasion, have security ;  
This hour it is searches the judgment through,  
When masks of beauty walk with beauty too.

## PERSPECTIVE

IN the Wheatsheaf parlour I sat to see  
The story of Chippington street go by,  
The squire, and dames of little degree,  
And drovers with cattle and flocks to cry.

And these were all as my creatures there,  
Twinkling to and fro in the sun,  
And placidly I had joy, had care,  
Of all their labours and dealings done.

Into the parlour strode me then  
Two fellows fiercely set at odds;  
To whom the difference of men  
Gave the sufficiency of gods.

They saw me, and they stept beyond  
To a chamber within earshot still,  
And each on each of broken bond,  
And honour, and inflexible will,

Railed. And loud the little inn grew,  
But nothing I cared their quarrel to learn,  
Though the issue tossing between the two  
They deemed the bait of the world's concern.

Only I thought how most are men  
Fantastic when they most are proud,  
And out of my laughter I looked again  
On the flowing figures of Chippington crowd.

## AT AN INN

WE are talkative proud, and assured, and self-sufficient,

The quick of the earth this day;

This inn is ours, and its courtyard, and English history,

And the Post Office up the way.

The stars in their changes, and heavenly speculation,

The habits of birds and flowers,

And character bred of poverty and riches,

All these are ours.

The world is ours, and these its themes and its substance,

And of these we are free men and wise;

Among them all we move in possession and judgment,

For a day, till it dies.

But in eighteen-hundred-and-fifty, who were the tenants,

Sure and deliberate as we?

They knew us not in the time of their ascension,  
Their self-sufficiency.

And in nineteen-hundred-and-fifty this inn shall flourish,

And history still be told,

And the heat of blood shall thrive, and speculation,

When we are cold.

## MOONRISE

WHERE are you going, you pretty riders?—  
To the moon's rising, the rising of death's  
moon,  
Where the waters move not, and birds are still  
and songless,  
Soon, very soon.

Where are you faring to, you proud Hectors?  
Through battle, out of battle, under the grass,  
Dust behind your hoof-beats rises, and into dust,  
Clouded, you pass.

I'm a pretty rider, I'm a proud Hector,  
I as you a little am pretty and proud;  
I with you am riding, riding to the moonrise,  
So sing we loud—

“Out beyond the dust lies mystery of moonrise,  
We go to chiller learning than is bred in the  
sun,  
Hectors, and riders, and a simple singer,  
Riding as one.”

## OF ILES FARM

(TO MY FRIENDS THERE)

HERE is a theme for graver tones  
Than now I sing.  
It shelters you ; it is a pole  
For thought upon your travelling ;  
Here dreams established are in stones,  
To mark and bring  
Irresolutions to control  
From truant wing.

But not of these my argument.  
I celebrate  
Your hearth, your comfortable speech  
Of young years and late,  
Your courtesies that are content  
To sow and wait,  
For these as planets are to teach  
My travel to your gate.



## TO SIEGFRIED SASSOON

It was you and your friends Robert Graves and  
Nichols that made me feel  
That a young man was passing from youth into  
middle-age ;  
I had heard many a younger song, but none to  
steal  
Pride of youth from our songs who sang from  
Gloucestershire,  
And then you came with your chronicles of a  
queer new pilgrimage.

And I knew that the difficult moods had come  
again with fire  
To touch the brains of men who were boys to  
my passing youth,  
And I was glad, for the true song is the poet's  
desire,  
Though he hear it afar on the dawn when he  
passes the eye of noon,  
And I was glad for the springing of seed from  
the shares of truth.

And, though you sang of a grief that gathered  
your hearts too soon,  
It was not grief that beckoned your thought  
to the tides of song,  
But only an old Leviticus renewed in our waning  
June,

That gave due time\* to your primroses, and  
started a frozen wing.  
And the young man gives to the younger the  
salutation of song,  
For lonely is companionship of the prides that  
sing.

## PROVOCATIONS

I AM no merry monger when  
I see the slatterns of the town :  
I hate to think of docile men  
Whose angers all are driven down ;  
For sluts make joy a thing obscene,  
And in contempt is nothing clean.

I like to see the ladies walk  
With heels to set their chins atilt :  
I like to hear the clergy talk  
Of other clergy's people's guilt ;  
For happy is the amorous eye,  
And indignation clears the sky.

## INSTRUCTION

I HAVE a place in a little garden,  
That laurel-leaf and fern  
Keep a cool place though fires of summer  
All the green grasses burn.  
Little cool winds creep there about  
When winds all else are dead,  
And tired limbs there find gentle keeping,  
And humours of sloth are shed.

So do your songs come always to me,  
Poets of age and age,  
Clear and cool as rivers of wind  
Threading my hermitage,  
Stilling my mind from tribulation  
Of life half-seen, half-heard,  
With images made in the brain's quietness,  
And the leaping of a word.

## RESPONSIBILITY

You ploughmen at the gate,  
All that you are for me  
Is of my mind create,  
And in my brain to be  
A figure newly won  
From the world's confusion.

And if you are of grace,  
That's honesty for me,  
And if of evil face,  
Recorded then shall be  
Dishonour that I saw  
Not beauty, but the flaw.

## HISTORY

SOMETIMES, when walls and occupation seem  
A prison merely, a dark barrier  
Between me everywhere  
And life, or the larger province of the mind,  
As dreams confined,  
As the trouble of a dream,  
I seek to make again a life long gone,  
To be  
My mind's approach and consolation,  
To give it form's lucidity,  
Resilient form, as porcelain pieces thrown  
In buried China by a wrist unknown,  
Or mirrored brigs upon Fowey sea.

Then to my memory comes nothing great  
Of purpose, or debate,  
Or perfect end,  
Pomp, nor love's rapture, nor heroic hours to  
    spend—  
But most, and strangely, for long and so much  
    have I seen,  
Comes back an afternoon  
Of a June  
Sunday at Elsfield, that is up on a green  
Hill, and there,  
Through a little farm parlour door,  
A floor  
Of red tiles and blue,

And the air

Sweet with the hot June sun cascading through  
The vine-leaves under the glass, and a scarlet  
fume

Of geranium flower, and soft and yellow bloom  
Of musk, and stains of scarlet and yellow glass.

Such are the things remain

Quietly, and for ever, in the brain,

And the things that they choose for history-  
making pass.

## THE TALENT

WHEN we as ghosts inhabit history,  
In reputation happy or forlorn,  
Uncounted then shall all our quarrels be  
As any dusty calendar outworn.

“ They, with what wit they might, immortal  
dress  
Devised for instant beauty ere they died ”  
So shall we live, but shall not live by less ;  
O brief and bitter hearts, be pacified.



## DEAR AND INCOMPARABLE

DEAR and incomparable  
Is that love to me  
Flowing out of the woodlands,  
Out of the sea ;  
Out of the firmament breathing  
Between pasture and sky,  
For no reward is cherished here  
To reckon by.

It is not of my earning,  
Nor forfeit I can  
This love that flows upon  
The poverty of man,  
Though faithless and unkind  
I sleep and forget,  
This love that asks no wage of me  
Waits my waking yet.

Of such is the love, dear,  
That you fold me in,  
It knows no governance  
Of virtue or sin ;  
From nothing of my achieving  
Shall it enrichment take,  
And the glooms of my unworthiness  
It will not forsake.

## THE WOOD

I WALKED a nut-wood's gloom. And overhead  
A pigeon's wing beat on the hidden boughs,  
And shrews upon shy tunnelling woke thin  
Late winter leaves with trickling sound. Across  
My narrow path I saw the carrier ants  
Burdened with little pieces of bright straw.  
These things I heard and saw, with senses fine  
For all the little traffic of the wood,  
While everywhere, above me, underfoot,  
And haunting every avenue of leaves,  
Was mystery, unresting, taciturn.

. . . . .  
And haunting the lucidities of life  
That are my daily beauty, moves a theme.  
Beating along my undiscovered mind.

## AT AN EARTHWORKS

RINGED high with turf the arena lies,  
The neighbouring world unseen, unheard,  
Here are but unhorizoned skies,  
And on the skies a passing bird,

The conies and a wandering sheep,  
The castings of the chambered mole,—  
These, and the haunted years that keep  
Lost agonies of blood and soul.

They say that in the midnight moon  
The ghostly legions gather yet,  
And hear a ghostly timbrel-tune,  
And see a ghostly combat met.

These are but yeoman's tales. And here  
No marvel on the midnight falls,  
But starlight marvellously clear,  
Being girdled in these shadowy walls.

Yet now strange glooms of ancestry  
Creep on me through this morning light,  
Some spectral self is seeking me . . .  
I will not parley with the night.

## THE PATRIOT

SCARCE is my life more dear to me,  
Brief tutor of oblivion,  
Than fields below the rookery  
That comfortably looks upon  
The little street of Piddington.

I never think of Avon's meadows,  
Ryton woods or Rydal mere,  
Or moon-tide moulding Cotswold shadows,  
But I know that half the fear  
Of death's indifference is here.

I love my land. No heart can know  
The patriot's mystery, until  
It aches as mine for woods ablow  
In Gloucestershire with daffodil,  
Or Bicester brakes that violets fill.

No man can tell what passion surges  
For the house of his nativity  
In the patriot's blood, until he purges  
His grosser mood of jealousy,  
And comes to meditate with me

Of gifts of earth that stamp his brain  
As mine the pools of Ludlow mill,  
The hazels fencing Trilly's Lane,  
And Forty Acres under Brill,  
The ferry under Elsfeld hill.

These are what England is to me,  
Not empire, nor the name of her  
Ranging from pole to tropic sea.  
These are the soil in which I bear  
All that I have of character.

That men my fellows near and far  
May live in like communion,  
Is all I pray ; all pastures are  
The best beloved beneath the sun ;  
I have my own ; I envy none.

## DEER

SHY in their herding dwell the fallow deer.  
They are spirits of wild sense. Nobody near  
Comes upon their pastures. There a life they  
live,

Of sufficient beauty, phantom, fugitive,  
Treading as in jungles free leopards do,  
Printless as evelight, instant as dew.  
The great kine are patient, and home-coming  
sheep

Know our bidding. The fallow deer keep  
Delicate and far their counsels wild,  
Never to be folded reconciled  
To the spoiling hand as the poor flocks are ;  
Lightfoot, and swift, and unfamiliar,  
These you may not hinder, unconfined  
Beautiful flocks of the mind.

## ON A LAKE

SWEET in the rushes  
The reed-singers make  
A music that hushes  
The life of the lake;  
The leaves are dumb,  
And the tides are still,  
And no calls come  
From the flocks on the hill.

Forgotten now  
Are nightingales,  
And on his bough  
The linnet fails,—  
Midway the mere  
My mirrored boat  
Shall rest and hear  
A slenderer note.

Though, heart, you measure  
But one proud rhyme,  
You build a treasure  
Confounding time—  
Sweet in the rushes  
The reed-singers make  
A music that hushes  
The life of the lake.

## HARVEST MOON

"HUSH!" was my whisper  
At the stair-top  
When the waggoners were down below  
Home from the barley-crop.  
Through the high window  
Looked the harvest moon,  
While the waggoners sang  
A harvest tune,—  
"HUSH!" was my whisper when  
Marjory stept  
Down from her attic-room,  
A true-love-adept.

"Fill a can, fill a can,"  
Waggoners of heart were they,  
"Harvest-home, harvest-home,  
Barleycorn is home to-day." . . .  
"Marjory, hush now—  
Harvest—you hear?"—  
Red was the moon's rose  
On the full year,  
The cobwebs shook, so well  
Did the waggoners sing—  
"HUSH!"—there was beauty at  
That harvesting.



## PASSAGE

WHEN you deliberate the page  
Of Alexander's pilgrimage,  
Or say—"It is three years, or ten,  
Since Easter slew Connolly's men,"  
Or prudently to judgment come  
Of Antony or Absalom,  
And think how duly are designed  
Case and instruction for the mind,  
Remember then that also we,  
In a moon's course, are history.

## THE COMMON LOT

WHEN youth and summertime are gone,  
And age puts quiet garlands on,  
And in the speculative eye  
The fires of emulation die,  
But as to-day our time shall be  
Trembling upon eternity,  
While, still inconstant in debate,  
We shall on revelation wait,  
And age as youth will daily plan  
The sailing of the caravan.

## TO ONE I LOVE

As I walked along the passage, in the night,  
    beyond the stairs, .

In the dark,

I was afraid,

Suddenly,

As will happen you know, my dear, it will often  
    happen.

I knew the walls at my side,

Knew the drawings hanging there, the order of  
    their placing, .

And the door where my bed lay beyond,

And the window on the landing—

There was even a little ray of moonlight through  
    it—

All was known, familiar, my comfortable home ;

And yet I was afraid,

Suddenly,

In the dark, like a child, of nothing,

Of vastness, of eternity, of the queer pains of  
    thought,

Such as used to trouble me when I heard,

When I was little, the people talk

On Sundays of "As it was in the Beginning,

Is Now, and Ever Shall Be. . . ."

I am thirty-six years old,

And folk are friendly to me,

And there are no ghosts that should have reason  
    to haunt me,

And I have tempted no magical happenings

By forsaking the clear noons of thought  
For the wizardries that the credulous take  
To be golden roads to revelation.  
I knew all was simplicity there,  
Without conspiracy, without antagonism,  
And yet I was afraid,  
Suddenly,  
A child, in the dark, forlorn. . . .  
And then, as suddenly,  
I was aware of a profound, a miraculous under-  
standing,  
Knowledge that comes to a man  
But once or twice, as a bird's note  
In the still depth of the night  
Striking upon the silence . . .  
I stood at the door, and there  
Was mellow candle-light,  
And companionship, and comfort,  
And I knew  
That it was even so,  
That it must be even so  
With death.  
I knew  
That no harm could have touched me out of  
my fear,  
Because I had no grudge against anything,  
Because I had desired  
In the darkness, when fear came,  
Love only, and pity, and fellowship,  
And it would have been a thing monstrous,  
Something defying nature

And all the simple universal fitness  
For any force there to have come evilly  
Upon me, who had no evil in my heart,  
But only trust, and tenderness  
For every presence about me in the air,  
For the very shadow about me,  
Being a little child for no one's envy.  
And I knew that God  
Must understand that we go  
To death as little children,  
Desiring love so simply, and love's defence,  
And that he would be a barren God, without  
    humour,  
To cheat so little, so wistful, a desire,  
That he created  
In us, in our childishness . . .  
And I may never again be sure of this,  
But there, for a moment,  
In the candle-light,  
Standing at the door,  
I knew.

## HARVESTING

PALE sheaves of oats, pocked by untimely rain,  
    Under October skies,  
    Teased and forlorn,  
Ungathered lie where still the tardy wain  
    Comes not to seal  
    The seasons of the corn,  
From prime to June, with running barns of  
    grain.

Now time with me is at the middle year,  
    The register of youth  
    Is now to sing . . .  
My thoughts are ripe, my moods are in full ear ;  
    That they should fail  
    Of harvesting,  
Uncarried on cold fields, is all my fear.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Rather fewer than half these poems have been published in a small limited edition by Mr. C. W. Beaumont, with designs by Mr. Paul Nash. Some have appeared in *The Athenæum*, *The Cambridge Magazine*, *Colour*, *Country Life*, *The English Review*, *The Fortnightly Review*, *The Nation*, *The New Witness*, *The Sphere*, *To-Day*, and *The Westminster Gazette*, whose respective Editors I thank.

J. D.

PRINTED BY  
HARTELL, WATSON AND VINET, LD.,  
LONDON AND AYLESBURY.



**Loyal-  
ties**

By  
John  
Drink-  
water

—  
Sidd-  
wick  
and  
Jackson  
Ltd.







KU-995-226

